

NEW BIRTH.

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"Except a man be born of water and the Spirit, he cannot enter into the Kingdom of God." Wilson translates as follows: "If any one be not born of water and Spirit, he cannot enter the Kingdom of God." John 3: 5. Elder H. Wise in criticising Brother Cassel, in which criticism I fully acquiesce he answers very largely that which he thinks I cannot digest. I quote from Elder Wise's article in No. 6, BRETHREN EVANGELIST, as follows. Brother Cassel says "repentance is one thing, regeneration another, the mere indwelling of the Spirit another, and the baptism of the Holy Ghost is still another, all four may take place simultaneously, but as a rule they do not. There is often repentance without regeneration, there is often repentance and regeneration without a reception or indwelling of the Spirit." Here Elder Wise says he cannot see his way clear. I am just like Brother Wise and will quote his reason, and offer the same as mine, (by his permission.) Webster, giving regenerate, 1. To reproduce. 2. Born anew, renovated in heart, changed from a natural to a spiritual state. Brother Wise says, "How this can take place without a reception or indwelling of the Holy Spirit is what I cannot understand." Neither can I. And I cannot conceive how our dear Brother Cassel or any other Bible student, can biblically so understand. For such an event would be simply impossible. The etymology of regenerate is from the Latin as follows, *regenerare, generare*, to beget, to create; and the prefix *re*, again, to cause to be spiritually born anew; to cause to become a Christian; to renew the heart by a change of affections; to change the heart and affections from enmity to a love of God; to implant holy affections in the heart. Born anew, renovated in heart, changed from a natural to a spiritual state. (Webster.) Regeneration—is the change and renovation of the soul by the Spirit and grace of God. John 3: 5, 6. It is called the new birth and consists in the infusion of spiritual life into the soul. John 5: 25. Whereby it is enabled to perform spiritual actions, and live to God. Rom. 14: 8; Titus 3: 5. Not by works of righteousness which we have done, but according to his mercy he saved us by the washing of regeneration, and renewing of the Holy Ghost. James 1: 18. Of his own will begat he us by the word of truth. And our Savior speaking to Nicodemus says, "Verily I say unto thee, except a man be born again he cannot see the Kingdom of God." John 3: 3-5. And the Apostle Peter says, "In like manner,

that God hath begotten us again unto a lively hope by the resurrection of Jesus Christ from the dead." I Peter 1: 3. That is he hath given us a new birth, he hath regenerated and renewed us, and thereby wrought in us such a hope or assurance of salvation, as puts life into our souls; which hope is built upon the resurrection of Christ, and the doctrines depending on it as the foundation of our resurrection and future glory, since the members must partake of the same condition as the head. John 14: 19.

Cruden: The new birth is but one. But is twofold. Of water and Spirit. Christ did not say to Nicodemus, you must be reborn. Twice "or born again." Twice. But "born again." Not "except a man be born again of water," and then afterward born again of the Spirit. But, "born of water and Spirit." In regeneration, the being born of the water and Spirit are inseparably connected, then follows confirmation and the "gift of the Holy Spirit," spoken of by Peter on the day of Pentecost. To comfort, lead and guide the new born babe in Christ, into all truth, in order to a proper development, into spiritual manhood and womanhood in Christ Jesus. As a new born babe is as proper, and as perfect a human being when born as it will ever become being possessed of all the members of the body as perfect as pertains to human generation. But many years are required with proper care and culture, to a full development. So by analogy the spiritual child after being born again or reborn, regenerated, made a new creature in Christ Jesus, requires time, care, culture and close application in order to a full spiritual development to man and womanhood.

Our Blessed Redeemer often made use of things that were real in life and nature by which to instruct, and more deeply impress the truths he taught. In addressing Nicodemus he said, "Except a man be born again." Nicodemus immediately thought of natural generation, while Christ was teaching regeneration. There is, I presume, some analogy between the two a few points of which I will notice. In order to a birth of a proper human being: 1. Conception. 2. Quickening. (Animal life.) 3. Birth. In the spiritual there must of necessity be first, conception of the incorruptible seed by the Word of God which liveth and abideth forever. I Peter 1: 23.

Christ in his exegesis of the parable of the sower said, "The seed is the Word of God." This incorruptible seed must be conceived in the heart and if the "conception" is proper the seed will grow, and 2. Quickening. (Spiritual life.) And

3. The Spiritual Birth. A proper conception of the incorruptible seed produces faith. Peter tells us, Acts 15: 9, "That God put no difference between Jews and Gentiles purifying their hearts by faith." Paul testifies "that with the heart man believeth unto righteousness; and with the mouth confession is made unto salvation."

Repentance produces a change of life, purifies the life. All of this is accomplished through the good seed which is the "word of God," and the divine power and influence of the "Holy Spirit." And hence the spiritual child is begotten of God his spiritual Father. In a natural birth there is of necessity a change of state, the child being brought into the literal kingdom of the world. Through trine dipping in honor and reverence to the triune God, the Spiritual child is transplanted into the Kingdom of Christ, and as a new creature born of the water and Spirit, is in a new state, adopted into the family of God. Hence in regeneration there is a three-fold change. 1. A change of heart. 2. A change of life. 3. A change of state. In regeneration there is another three-fold work.

1. The sinner must die to sin, the circumcision of the heart must take place. Circumcision was a cutting off. So in the circumcision of the heart there must be a cutting off of the sins of the flesh. A ceasing to sin. Then the body of sin will be dead.

2. In baptism there is a representation of the burial of the dead body.

3. A resurrection of the new man out of the watery grave to walk in newness of life. Paul would say, "Having the heart sprinkled from an evil conscience and the body washed with (in) pure water." "And according to his mercy he saved us by the washing of regeneration, and renewing of the Holy Spirit. Heb. 10: 22; Titus 3: 5. Again we hear the Apostle Paul saying, "Know ye not that so many of us as were (are) baptized into Jesus Christ were baptized into his death? Therefore we are buried with him by baptism into death; that like as Christ was raised up from the dead by the glory of the Father, even so we also should walk in newness of life." Rom. 6: 3, 4. "Buried with him in baptism, wherein also we are risen with him through the faith of the operation of God, who hath raised him from the dead." Col. 2: 12. "For as many of you as have been baptized into Jesus Christ have put on Christ." Gal. 3: 27.

I think I have now offered sufficient testimony to prove to any and every candid mind that the new birth or regeneration, is not, and never was, called a baptism of the Holy Ghost. The holy